

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 LAB-01 SIL-01  
EB-04 INR-05 INRE-00 OIC-01 L-01 ARA-10 NEA-07  
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8680  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 GENEVA 5270

LIMDIS

PASS WHITE HOUSE

PASS LABOR FOR SECRETARY MARSHALL, HOROWITZ AND ILAB

PASS COMMERCE FOR SECRETARY KREPS AND UPTON

IO FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY MAYNES, DALLEY AND PALMER

S/IL FOR DALE GOOD

EO 11652: GDS  
TAGS: ILA PLAB  
SUBJ: 63RD SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR CONFERENCE:  
THE ISSUE OF U.S. MEMBERSHIP IN ILO

1. SUMMARY: WE HAVE TOLD ILO MEMBER COUNTRIES THAT THE  
RESULTS OF THE 63RD SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR  
CONFERENCE (ILC) WOULD BE CRUCIAL TO OUR FINAL DECISION  
ON MEMBERSHIP IN ILO. IN EFFECT, WE ASKED THEM TO DECIDE  
WHETHER THEY WANTED A TRADITIONAL ILO WITH US IN IT OR A  
POLITICAL FORUM WITHOUT THE U.S. WE POINTED THE ISSUES  
ON WHICH THEY COULD EXPRESS THEIR PREFERENCES, AND WE ASKED  
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FOR ANSWERS AT THIS SESSION AND NOT IN THE FUTURE. THE  
REPLY OF THE MAJORITY OF THE MEMBERS (THE G-77 AND THE  
COMMUNIST BLOC) WAS CLEAR; THEIR FIRST PRIORITY WERE  
THE POLITICAL ISSUES. WITH APPARENT NONCHALANCE ABOUT

FUTURE U.S. PARTICIPATION, THEY FRUSTRATED MAJOR U.S.  
OBJECTIVES AT THIS CONFERENCE AND ATTACKED THE FUNDAMEN-

TAL WORK OF THE ILO. FOR THE U.S., THE NEGATIVE RESULTS OF THE ILC MEAN THAT UNLESS WE WITHDRAW FROM ILO, OUR CREDIBILITY IN ILO AND IN THE ENTIRE UN SYSTEM WILL BE VIRTUALLY ZERO. THIS MESSAGE REPORTS SOME OF THE ATMOSPHERICS AT THE CONFERENCE. END SUMMARY.

2. THE ISSUES --- SINCE OUR LETTER OF INTENT TO WITHDRAW, U.S. POLICY IN ILO HAS IN ESSENCE BEEN TO ASK MEMBER COUNTRIES WHETHER THEY WOULD JOIN US IN TURNING THE ORGANIZATION BACK TO ITS BASIC PURPOSES AND AWAY FROM A DUPLICATION OF THE POLITICAL SCENE AT THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY. WE HAVE TOLD THEM THE EVENTS OF THE 63RD ILC WOULD BE CRUCIAL TO OUR DECISION TO REMAIN IN OR TO LEAVE ILO. OUR OBJECTIVES AT THE ILC WERE CLEAR: WE ASKED THAT (1) THE 1974 RESOLUTION CONDEMNING ISRAEL BE BURIED AND ARTICLE 17 OF THE STANDING ORDERS BE AMENDED TO REFLECT THE PRINCIPLE OF NO CONDEMNATION WITHOUT INVESTIGATION; (2) THE NEGOTIATIONS ON STRUCTURAL REFORM BE HANDLED AT AN INFORMAL LEVEL LATER THIS YEAR; (3) THE POLITICAL ASPECTS OF THE CONFERENCE BE RESTRICTED TO ILO ISSUES AND NOT BE A RERUN OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY; AND (4) THE CONFERENCE DIWOWN THE DOUBLE STANDARD AND ENDORSE THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF ITS COMMITTEE ON APPLICATION OF CONVENTIONS.

3. THE ANSWERS --- IN RESPONSE TO THE U.S. APPEAL FOR  
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DEPOLITIZATION, THE ILC WAS MESMERIZED FROM THE START TO THE LAST DAY BY A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN IMEC AND THE G-77, THE LATTER LED BY THE EGYPTIANS AND SUPPORTED BY THE COMMUNIST BLOC. THIS MAJORITY USED THEIR VOTES TO THWART ALL U.S. OBJECTIVES. THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEES WAS DELAYED FOR SEVERAL DAYS BECAUSE OF ARAB AND G-77 INSISTENCE THAT THEIR CANDIDATE CHAIR THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE, WHICH AT THAT TIME WAS EXPECTED TO DEBATE THE FOLLOWUP OF THE 1974 ISRAELI RESOLUTION. IN A AFORCED AND UNPRECEDENTED VOTE, THE ARAB CANDIDATE WAS ELECTED (ILC CHAIRMEN ARE DESIGNATED IN INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THE CONFERENCE OFFICERS AND THE LEADERS OF REGIONAL GROUPS), AND THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE PROCEEDED TO FILIBUSTER IN ORDER TO AVOID ANOTHER POLITICAL ISSUE: A PANAMANIAN RESOLUTION (MODELED ON THE 1974 ISRAELI RESOLUTION) CONDEMNING THE U.S. FOR RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN THE CANAL ZONE. THE PROPOSAL TO AMEND ARTICLE 17 OF THE ILC STANDING ORDERS WAS CONSIGNED ON THE THIRD DAY TO THE ILC STRUCTURE COMMITTEE WHERE IT (AND TWO OTHER WESTERN PROPOSALS) WAS HELD CAPTIVE TO PROGRESS ON G-77 DEMANDS TO "DEMOCRATIZE THE ANTIQUATED ILO STRUCTURE." THE SOLE

AGREEMENT WAS TO REVIVE THE MANDATE OF WORKING PARTY  
ON STRUCTURE FOR ANOTHER YEAR BUT THE G-77 REITERATED  
THE THREAT OF A SPECIAL "CONSTITUTIONAL SESSION" OF  
THE ILC IN 1979 IF AGREEMENT ON STRUCTURAL CHANGE WAS  
NOT REACHED ON THEIR TIMETABLE. AT ONE POINT IT  
SEEMED THAT THE LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR GENERAL HAD  
DEFUSED THE ISRAELI ISSUE BY REITERATING HIS DUTY TO  
REPORT TO THE ILC ON RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT  
PREVIOUS SESSIONS, INCLUDING THE 1974 RESOLUTION ON  
ISRAEL, AND BY REFERRING TO THE FACT THAT THE CONFERENCE  
COMMITTEE ON APPLICATION OF CONVENTIONS (CAC) AND THE  
COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS (COE) WERE SEIZED OF THE ISSUE OF  
EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES.  
HOWEVER, THE DG'S EFFORT WAS SHOT DOWN ON JUNE 20  
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WHEN THE ARAB-LED MAJORITY BLOCKED APPROVAL OF THE  
CAC REPORT BECAUSE THEY OBJECTED TO THE MATTER BEING  
HANDLED IN A NORMAL ILO INVESTIGATORY CHANNEL. THUS,  
THE ARABS INSISTED ON A POLITICAL STANDARD IN THE ILO  
APPROACH TO CONDITIONS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES,  
AND IN DOING SO, WILLINGLY REJECTED THE ENTIRE REPORT  
OF THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS AND IMPARTIAL COMPLIANCE  
MACHINERY IN THE ILO (A MEXICAN MOTION TO SEPARATE THE  
ISRAELI SECTION FROM THE CAC REPORT AND TO VOTE SEPARATELY  
ON EACH PART WAS NOT SECONDED).

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ACTION IO-06

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 GENEVA 5270

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4. THE COMMUNIST BLOC - IN CONTRAST TO MUTED SIGNALS DURING THE PAST YEAR, THE ACTIONS OF EE DELEGATIONS LEFT NO DOUBT THEY WERE INDIFFERENT TO U.S. MEMBERSHIP. THEY SAW AND TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE POLITICAL HAY WITH THE ARAB-LED G-77. NOTEWORTHY IS THE COINCIDENCE OF THE EE AND G-77 POSITIONS ON STRUCTURE (WHERE THE G-77 "RESOLUTION" ENDORSED THE CONCEPT OF "EQUITABLE REGIONAL REPRESENTATION", A LONG STANDING SOVIET DEMAND IN ILO) AND IN BLOCKING ADOPTION OF THE CAC REPORT ON JUNE 20. IN THE LATTER CASE, THE EE BLOC JOINED THE ARABS TO AVOID THE FULL IMPACT OF THE CRITICAL "SPECIAL PARAGRAPHS) ON THE USSR AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AS DID THE GOVERNMENTS OF CHILE AND ARGENTINA WHO WERE ALSO SINGLED OUT IN THE CAC REPORT. THE SOVIET STATEMENT IN PLENARY ILLUSTRATES HOW THEY EXPLOITED THE ARAB ISSUE TO ATTACH THE INVESTIGATORY AND COMPLIANCE MACHINERY OF ILO. IN A LENGTHY STATEMENT, THE USSR ACCUSED THE CAC AND THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS OF JUDGING "SOCIALIST" AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES BY "BOURGEOIS" LEGAL STANDARDS; IN PLACE OF UNIFORM APPLICATION OF CONVENTIONS, HE CALLED FOR CONSIDERATION OF DIFFERENT SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STRUCTURES, HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND SPECIFIC CONDITIONS.

5. THE G-77 --- UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE EGYPTIAN  
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AMBASSADOR, ELS SHAFEI, THE G-77 WAS UNEXPECTEDLY COHESIVE AND AGGRESSIVE IN OPPOSING U.S. OBJECTIVES. THE "MODERATE" ARABS, AFTER A STRUGGLE WHICH LED TO ACCEPTANCE OF THE DG'S LETTER OF JUNE 9, LOST CONTROL IN THEIR GROUP; THE "MODERATE" AFRICANS AND LATIN AMERICANS APPARENTLY WERE COMPLETELY INEFFECTIVE IN THEIR GROUPS. WORKING WITH EL SHAFEI IN LEADING THE G-77 WAS A FAMILIAR CAST: THE REPRESENTATIVES OF SRI LANKA, MEXICO, VENEZUELA, PANAMA, CUBA, ALGERIA, IRAQ, SYRIA, LIBYA, YUGOSLAVIA, THE THE EE BLOC. THE STEAM IN THE G-77 WHICH BUILT UP IN THE LAST DAYS OF THE ILC (FOR EXAMPLE IN THE JUNE 20 VOTE ON THE CAC REPORT AND THE HARD LINE ON STRUCTURE) MAY HAVE BEEN FIRED BY ALGERIAN (AND PERHAPS OTHER) PERSUASIVENESS IN THE G-77 IN ARGUING THAT THE U.S. WAS BLUFFING AND DID NOT INTEND TO WITHDRAW FROM ILO, AND THAT THE U.S. WAS HIGH-HANDEDLY TRYING TO DICTATE TO THE ORGANIZATION. HOWEVER, WHATEVER THE MOTIVATION OR THE GROUP DYNAMIC WITHIN THE G-77, THE RESULT WAS CLEAR. THE SO-CALLED MODERATES FOLLOWED THE LEADERS IN GIVING POLITICAL ISSUES THE HIGHEST PRIORITY AND IN OPPOSING U.S. OBJECTIVES. EVEN MORE SIGNIFICANT WAS THE DELIBERATE WAY IN WHICH THE G-77 DOWNGRADED THE USE OF THE IMPARTIAL AND VENERABLE ILO

INVESTIGATORY PROCEDURES AND THE OMINOUS ANNOUNCEMENT  
OF A TIMETABLE FOR STRUCTURAL REFORM.

6. IMEC --- THE FACT THAT IMEC VOTED WITH THE U.S. WAS A BRIGHT SPOT THROUGHOUT THE CONFERENCE. EVEN WHEN IT LOOKED AS IF THE U.S. MIGHT FORCE A VOTE IN THE STRUCTURAL COMMITTEE ON THE ARTICLE 17 AMENDMENT -- A MOVE MOST IMEC MEMBERS THOUGHT UNWISE -- THEY ALL INDICATED THAT IN A SHOWDOWN THEY WOULD VOTE WITH US. UNFORTUNATELY, VOTING WAS NOT ENOUGH. AS FAR AS WE CAN TELL, ONLY THE FRENCH DID ANY  
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SIGNIFICANT CORRIDOR WORK. HAD THE MAJOR IMEC POWERS MADE PARALLEL DEMARCHES IN CAPITALS, OR HAD THEY PUBLICLY STATED AN UNWILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN FUTURE DISCUSSIONS OF STRUCTURAL REFORM, AND CERTAINLY IF SOME HAD LET IT BE KNOWN THEY WERE CONSIDERING WITHDRAWAL, THE U.S. POSITION WOULD HAVE BEEN STRONGER AND MIGHT HAVE PREVAILED. IF WE LEAVE ILO, THESE ALTERNATIVES REMAIN FOR IMEC MEMBERS, INDEED, THEY ARE UNDOUBTEDLY CONSIDERING THEM IN THEIR POST-CONFERENCE ASSESSMENTS.

7. COMMENT: EVEN MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE FRUSTRATION OF U.S. INITIATIVES AT THE ILC IS THE G-77 ATTACK ON ONE OF THE FUNDAMENTAL PILLARS OF THE ILO -- ITS INVESTIGATORY MACHINERY AND THE G-77 PROMISE TO "DEMOCRATIZE" THE STRUCTURE OF THE ILO NEXT YEAR. THE ILC WAS SO VIVID AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE TRENDS CITED IN THE KISSINGER LETTER, WE WOULD BE HARD PRESSED TO JUSTIFY STAYING IN THE ORGANIZATION. THE BLOCKING OF THE CAC REPORT ALSO UNDERCUTS THE ARGUMENT THAT IN SPITE OF POLITICAL NONSENSE AT THE ILC, THE TECHNICAL WORK OF THE ILO GOES ON; BECAUSE THE BEST CONVENTIONS ARE MEANINGLESS IF THE MEMBERS HAVE LOST THE WILL TO APPLY THEM. SOME IMEC MEMBERS ALREADY REALIZE THEY WILL HAVE TO GO IT ALONE IN ILO. AFTER THE JUNE 20 VOTE, THE CANADIANS TOLD US THEY DID NOT SEE HOW WE COULD STAY IN ILO. SINCE THEN THE U.K. AND NEW ZEALAND AMBASSADORS HAVE MADE SIMILAR REMARKS, AND THE ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR UNDERLINED THE DIFFERENCES OF PERCEPTION OF ILO IN A WAY THAT BLANDLY ASSUMED THE U.S. WILL LEAVE ILO. SORENSON

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